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ABSTRACT

A model is presented for clarifying the goals of an institution of higher education while simultaneously developing support for them among its various constituencies. The model assumes (1) the existence of two or more statements of goals, objectives, and/or purposes; (2) that the distinction between these statements is vague; and (3) that they are worded in such a way as to provide little, if any, direction for institutional managers. The model is presented in network format. It has two major parts: the first focuses on the development of the general goals of an institution, and the second addresses the development of its operational goals and objectives. The phases of the model are presented as separate networks. The terms "general goals," "operational goals," and "operational objectives" are used as a means of distinguishing between the levels of goals and objectives. The term "institution community" is used to refer to the various constituencies of an institution, including the president and other administrators, faculty, students, alumni, legislators, governing board members, and local residents. (Author/LBH)

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INSTITUTIONAL GOALS: A MODEL FOR
CLARIFYING AND ACQUIRING CONSENSUS

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Introduction

Higher education is in the midst of what many consider to be the biggest crises in its history. Economic pressures have led to some institutions closing their doors while others have set restrictions on their enrollments in an attempt to survive. Open conflicts between presidents and faculty are not uncommon. The nature of the academic curricula, its emphasis and the effectiveness of the educational delivery systems, is being questioned by the ever-increasing presence of non-traditional students -- blacks, women, Puerto Ricans and other minorities. Last but not least among the major causes of the crises in higher education is the involvement of the federal government in the desegregation of higher education. The Adams vs. Weinberger case, in particular, demands ten state-wide systems of higher education to either desegregate or risk termination of all federal financial assistance. It is the consensus of some, that potentially the results of this case will enhance or destroy the historically black college and black access to higher education in these states.

In light of this unhealthy condition, can one question the need for institutions of higher education to engage in some very serious introspection about its existence. As Woolfolk (1973) puts it, "It is essential that an institution understands: Who it is; why it is; and what it is." Although American educational institutions invariably try to be all things for all people, they cannot. Woolfolk further notes that "An institution must choose among alternate directions and priorities. It must set its own goals in order to provide guidelines for its operation and a raison d' ete that

is relevant for its on-and-off campus groups, including faculty, students, administrators, community, trustees, alumni and funding agencies."

Specifying the direction in which an institution is to move and formulating supportive strategies is no easy task. It involves developing and implementing planning strategies aimed not only at the identification of goals but which assure that they will be clearly stated, internally compatible and acceptable to the institution's constituencies.

The purpose of this paper is to present a model for clarifying an institution of higher education's goals while simultaneously developing support for them among its various constituencies. It is hoped that many will find it useful, especially developing institutions. It assumes (1) the existence of two or more statements of goals, objectives and/or purposes, (2) that the distinction between these statements is vague, and (3) that they are worded in such a way as to provide little, if any, direction for institutional managers.

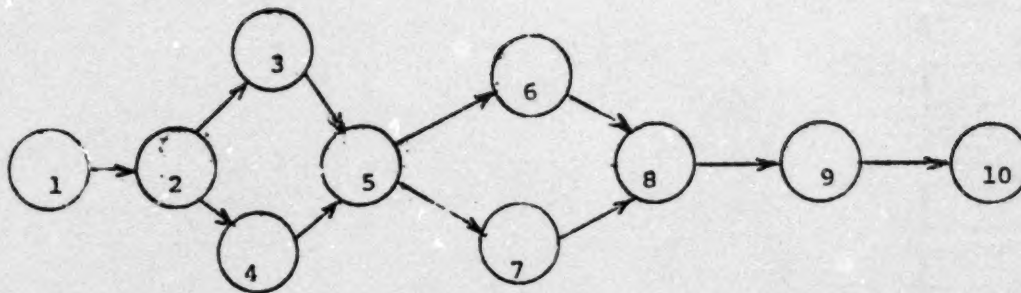
The model is presented in network format. It has two major parts: Phase I, focuses on the development of the general goals of an institution and Part II addresses the development of its operational goals and objectives. For the purpose of clarity, the phases of the model are presented as separate networks. The major events in each phase are explained in the body of the paper. The two digit figure in parenthesis following each sub-heading identifies the network event(s) being explained.

The terms "general goals", "operational goals" and "operational objectives" are used as a means of distinguishing between the often encountered levels problem associated with the use of goals and objectives. As one moves from

general to operational goals and finally to operational objectives, the level of specificity increases. General goals represent an institution's broad intentions and desired outcomes. Operational goals and objectives are simply successive refinements of these intended outcome statements.

To refer to the various constituencies of an institution and to what Woolfolk calls "on-and-off campus groups," the term "institution community" is used. It includes the president and other administrators, faculty, students, alumni, legislators, governing board members and local residents.

PHASE I
SUMMARY NETWORK FOR GOALS PROJECT
GENERAL GOALS



Event Identification

01 Start Project
02 Select Goals Committee
03 Review Literature
04 Consult With Institution Community
05 Prepare Preliminary Report

06 President Reviews Preliminary Report
07 Institution Community Reviews Preliminary Report
08 Prepare Final Report
09 Disseminate Final Report
10 Project End

PHASE I

Selecting the Goals Committee (01)

The Goals Committee is the coordinating unit for the project. It is responsible for (1) monitoring the project, (2) keeping the institution community informed of its progress and (3) democratically involving it in the formulation of the institution's goals. Because its work is likely to involve its members in some controversial issues, it is of paramount importance that the institution community is made aware that the Goals Committee's task is sanctioned by the highest authorities at the institution. Therefore, the Committee should be established by the President of the institution or its governing body.

The Committee should be chaired by the institution's chief academic officer since the academic component more so than any of the other institution components will be the most affected by the work of the Committee.

Committee size is also very important. To keep schedule conflicts at a minimum, it should not consist of more than 15 members. Attempting to get more than this number of busy people together for work sessions can involve a great deal of time and disrupt the time schedule for completing the task. Its membership should include representatives from the faculty, administration and student body as well as other members of the institution community.

Emphasis has been placed on who appoints the Committee, and the importance of its size and representation, care must be taken not to overload its membership with persons with all zeal and no skills. The Committee's responsibilities also include analyzing, synthesizing and clearly communicating ideas. If these skills are not present within the Committee, the assistance of additional faculty and administrators may be required.

Collecting Relevant Information (03 and 04)

Background information must be collected in order to provide a sound basis for the development of the goal statements. At least two major sources should be considered:

1. The Institution Community - through direct contact techniques such as forums, telephone interviews, and personal in-depth individual and small group interviews. Survey techniques using open-ended questions and closed-ended questionnaires may also prove effective.

The institution community is a primary source for ideas about what the institution ought to be involved in and how it might better realize its potential. It should be encouraged to voice its opinions and convictions.

2. Literature - such as previous statements of institutional goals, purposes and objectives, manpower reports and special reports on higher education trends published by federal, state and private agencies should be scrutinized closely.

The Preliminary Report (05)

The information gained from the Committee's review of the literature and the institution community must be analyzed and synthesized into statements which reflect what it perceives as the most relevant and feasible direction for the institution to follow. Needless to say, these statements must be well thought-out, rationally and futuristically. One way of beginning is to ask each member (or a cluster) of the Committee's members to write a position paper describing his interpretation of these inputs, and specifying what he perceives the institution goals ought to be.

These papers should be analyzed and synthesized into one Committee paper. This process might have to be repeated several times before the Committee is able to reach an agreement or what the general goals of the institution ought to be. However, a complete consensus is not necessarily a must. Position papers can be an option offered to persons holding minority views.

Once the Committee has reached an agreement, the position should be written-up as a preliminary statement of general goals for the institution. It should contain a clear statement of these goals, show how the historical goals of the institution can be logically subsumed under them, and present a rationale for the proposed general goals.

Review of the Preliminary Report (06 and 07)

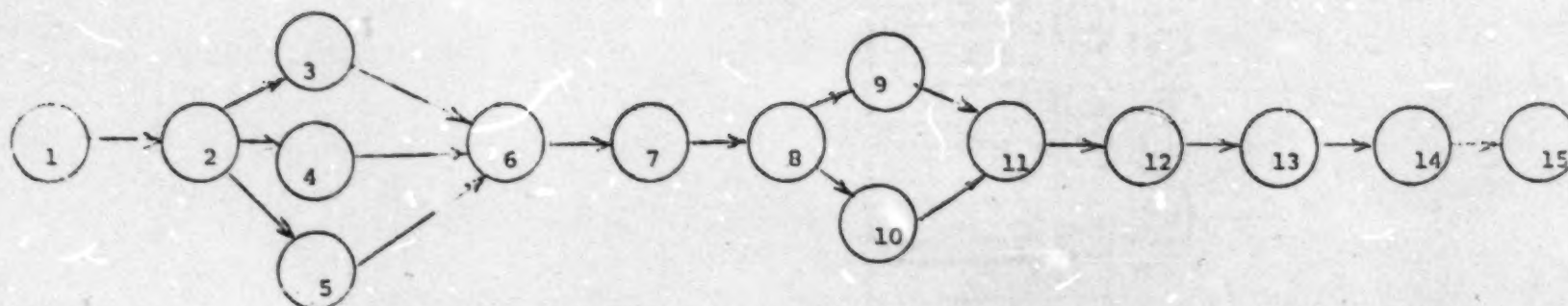
The preliminary goals statement should be reviewed by the President and the institution community. Opportunities should be provided for respondents to voice their reactions orally and in writing. One method of soliciting oral reactions is through a planning conference. The conference should be called by the Goals Committee and the president. Abstracts of the Committee's report should be disseminated prior to and at the conference. In essence, the conference is an open-hearings activity for the purpose of listening to reactions not defending the proposed goals, although the rationale for them should be clarified as needed.

Final Report, Phase I (08)

The final report should (1) explain the purpose of the study and the methodology used, (2) include a statement of the proposed goals, and (3) a description of how the Committee intends to identify and achieve a consensus related to operational goals for the institution. The institution community

should be continuously reminded of the purpose of the Goals Committee and its progress and projected activities.

PHASE II
SUMMARY NETWORK FOR GOALS PROJECT
OPERATIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



01 Start Project
02 Select Goals Structure and Survey
03 Establish Dissemination/Retrieval System
04 Select Analysis Design
05 Administer Goals Survey
06 Retrieve Survey
07 Analyze Survey Results

08 Prepare Survey Results
09 Disseminate Preliminary Report
10 Prepare Final Report
11 Disseminate Final Report
12 Prepare Operational Objectives
13 Approve Operational Objectives
14 Implement Operational Objectives
15 Project End

PHASE II

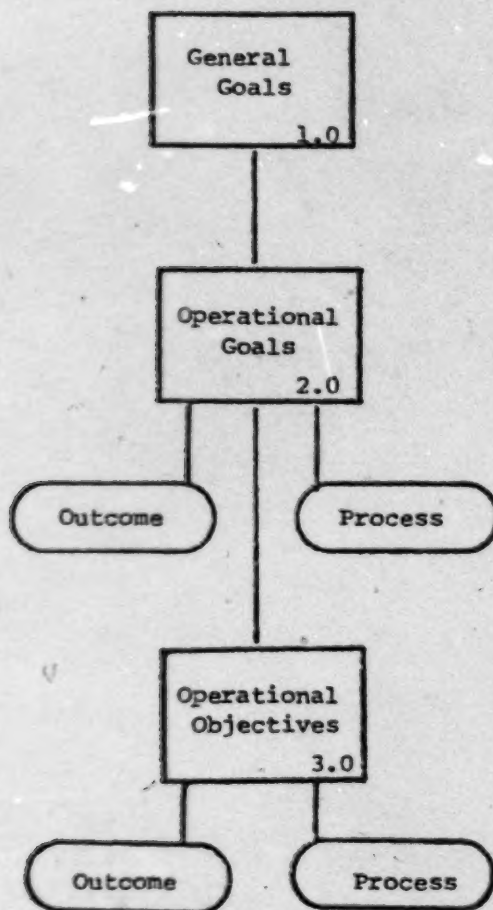
The Goals Structure and Survey (02)

A general statement of institutional goals derived through a systematic and democratic process is a good first step toward clarifying the goals of an institution. However, because their chief purpose is often to convey the institution's philosophy to many publics, these goals tend to lack the specificity necessary for managers to develop program goals and objectives. This is a primary weakness. A lack of inter-relatedness between the day-to-day operations of the institution and its general plan for development represented by these goals tends to impede the planning, organizing and control functions of its managers. At the mid and lower management levels of the institution, this incongruity is often the source of deep anxiety among managers. In a situation like this, it should come as no surprise to an institution to find some of its component programs working at odds with its general goals. An unusual number of program duplications and un-intended overlapping are symptoms of this problem.

Managers of educational institutions, like those of private industry, must be provided with a framework for organizing and controlling the institution's resources. This perhaps is the most important part of the goals clarification task for the Goals Committee. The proposed framework for this purpose is called a "goal^s structure" (see Diagram 1). It is a deductive method of specifying operational goals based on the general goals of an institution.

Levels 1 and 2 represent goals for the entire institution; they differ only in their level of specificity as noted earlier. While Level 3

DIAGRAM I
GOALS STRUCTURE



objectives are also stated in outcome and process terms, unlike general and operational goals, they are not institution-wide. They do represent the intended outcomes of specific components of an institution.

Peterson (1971) relates outcome statements to the substantive intentions of institutions such as intellectual development and vocational preparation. Process statements, on the other hand, are related to the internal intentions of the institution with regard to its campus climate. In both instances, however, these statements ought to be worded in such a way as to enable managers to effectively monitor their area activities.

Dissimination and Retrieval System (03)

Once the instrument for specifying the outcome and process goals has been selected, procedures for distributing them and securing their return should be delineated. A stratified random sampling technique should be used to assure a representative response. For example, ten percent of the student body, community businessmen and faculty may each be randomly selected to participate in the survey. There may be some groups whose membership an institution desires to completely survey. This can be done, but it should be done in addition to the general stratified random survey approach. Mailout, handout, and pick-up techniques should be fully exploited in order to maximize the opportunity for the institution community to fully participate in the selection and ranking of the operational goals of the institution. Due dates and where the survey form is to be returned should be well publicized and noted on the form.

Specifying the Analysis Design (04)

The format for analyzing the results of the survey should also be determined before the form is disseminated. Most published surveys of this nature offer an

analysis service which simply requires the user to indicate the comparisons he desires. For example, most institutions would probably want to know the average ranking of the various outcome and process statements by students, faculty, governing board members, alumni and administrators. They might want to sub-divide the faculty by school or department and analyze their individual group reactions. The point is that the Goals Committee will have to determine the comparisons it thinks will best assist it in deciding what the primary operational goals of the institution ought to be.

Once this has been done, the survey should be administered and appropriately monitored.

Preliminary Report (08)

A report of the average ranking of the various goal areas should be disseminated as soon as possible. It should clearly indicate the average ranking for all the groups surveyed and any sub-groups the Committee perceives as having a significant impact on the operations of the institution.

Final Report (10)

The final report for this task should include a description of the purpose of the study and the methodology used, and the relationship between the general goals and operational goals should be clarified. Outcome and process goals should be rank-ordered and a rationale for their ordering should be provided since it will represent the priority that is to be given by various components of the institution in their operations. Also, the report should clearly indicate that the major administrative areas of the institution are expected to develop outcome and process objectives based on the prioritized outcome and process goals. Finally, a time-line for the receipt of the outcome and process objectives by the Goals Committee should

be included in the final report.

Operational Objectives (12, 13 and 14)

The operational objectives, Level 3 of the Goals Structure, should be developed by the major operational components of the institution. Obviously, these outcome and process objectives should be consistent with the operational goals and reflect their prioritized emphasis. The Goals Committee should review them to assure that this consistency is achieved. When the Committee is satisfied that an adequate congruency between these two levels exists, the objectives should be returned to the area heads for implementation.

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